

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

"For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."—ISAIAH.

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RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGE.

BY ELDER JOHN V. HOOD.

(Continued from page 628, Vol. 27.)

CHAPTER I.—POPULAR BELIEF IN THE SCRIPTURES.

In the former article bearing the above title, I endeavored to point out very briefly the complete divergence of the various creeds of the religious world from the true order on which they were originally established, and the consequent results of this in the form of that schism and dissension which had since characterized their promulgation. I will now continue the subject further in its bearings and in relation to the effect that the course pursued by the advocates of these conflicting faiths has had on the world. Lactantius in his Institutes observes, "There are religious beliefs, which, having been handed down to men traditionally by their ancestors, they persist in maintaining, aye, and defending, most pertinaciously; nor do they consider of what sort they are, but hold confidently that they are true and true, simply for the reason that their elders have transmitted them. And so great is the authority of anti-

quity, that to enquire into it is deemed a crime." We might be accused of uncharitableness or unfairness were we to make this statement applicable to the present condition of Christianity (so called), and might be answered that such a belief was only current in the days when spiritual despotism and tyranny held sway over the judgment and intellect of the world; but, that in these days of civil, political and religious liberty, all vestiges of such a practice have disappeared. Still, looking under the specious garb of freedom worn by the lawgivers and Apostles of modern Christendom, we can discern that in reality blind obedience to, and unquestioning belief in popular creeds, is as much demanded of professedly Christian communities to-day, as it was in the days of Luther and Melancthon. We will look, for example, to the belief entertained by men in the Divine authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures. These sacred writings, both Protestants and Catholics found their belief

them are their principles drawn, and upon their veracity Christians claim to be able to give substantial and credible reasons for the hope that dwells within them. What their reasons for this implicit faith in the Bible are, nine-tenths of its believers would, we venture to state, if called upon, be unable to explain, and even those who profess to expound the truths contained in it, arrive at their conclusions by a strange method of reasoning. John Milton, Archbishop Usher, Bishop Watson, Westcott, and scores of others who have written elaborate criticisms both on the historical and ethical parts of Holy Writ, have exhibited a paucity of argument and a weakness of logic, which has drawn upon them the sneers and animadversions of the cavalier and the infidel. Milton in his famous theological treatise entitled "Christian Doctrine," although too liberal in many of his views for the then, and even now, existing state of the Church, has fallen sometimes into grievous error. "Let us," says he, in speaking of the Godhead, "discard reason in sacred matters, and follow the doctrine of Holy Scripture exclusively," implying, of course, the doctrine as interpreted by uninspired men. And further, when treating on the Scriptures, he says, "The process of our belief in them is as follows: we set out with a general belief in their authenticity, founded on the testimony either of the visible Church, or of the existing manuscripts; afterwards, by an inverse process, the authority of the Church itself, and of the different books as contained in the manuscripts, is confirmed by the internal evidence implied in the uniform tenor of Scripture, considered as a whole:" and further he says, "As the Samaritans believed Christ, first for the woman's word, but next and much rather for his own, so we the Scripture: first, on the Church's word, but afterwards and much more for its own, as the word of God; yea, the Church itself we believe then for the Scripture." So that by this singular process of reasoning, because a Church founds its principles upon Scripture, we are to believe in the divinity of that Church; and because we believe in the divinity of the Church, we must

of necessity believe in the authenticity of the Scriptures. The same reasoning would equally apply to the Koran of the Mahomedan, or the Shasters and Vedas of the Brahmin or the Buddhist. But, it may be argued, this is not the process by which men are taught to believe in the Bible now. Learning and philosophy have opened up so many new fields for thought on the part of those seeking after truth, and the discoveries of science have been so great, and at the same time so much in harmony with Scripture, that the wonder now would be that any man did not believe in it. To this again we answer, that if so, it appears strange that science and religion, instead of being united together, prove antagonists, and enunciate theories so contradictory to each other. What are we to think when we find those who hold high positions in the established churches of the country, expelled from the pale of these churches because, under the increased light which science has brought to bear upon the facts recorded in the Bible, they will not yield an unqualified assent to every word written there, without bringing their reasoning powers to bear upon the subject? The tone assumed by men who profess to expound the doctrines of Holy Writ, is such as to cause those who sit under their ministrations to eschew thought entirely, and to treat as heretical any attempt to harmonize the written word with the visible creation. A Divine infallibility seems to be attached by them to every line and letter of the mere text of the Bible, so that, as Bishop Lee of Manchester says, "All our hopes for eternity; the very foundations of our faith; our nearest and dearest consolations are taken from us, if one line of that Sacred Book be declared to be unfaithful or untrustworthy." But, again, while maintaining this position in words, he abandons it in point of fact, and retreats behind the assertion that, "every line of Scripture will amply bear the pressure of any test applied to it, if viewed with relation to the subject it really refers to; the state, mentally and morally, of those to whom it was addressed, and the effect it was intended to convey." The

Rev. Dr. Baylee, the Principal of St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead, which, as the Bishop of Winchester observes, contributes the twentieth part of the candidates for the English Church ministry, says in his manual, "Verbal Inspiration,"—"What I believe to be the truth is this,—the Bible is God's word, in the same sense as if He had made use of no human agent, but had himself spoken it, as we know he did the Decalogue. Modern science, with all its wonderful advances, has discovered not one single inaccurate allusion to physical truth, in all the countless illustrations employed in the Bible. It cannot be less than verbally inspired. Every word, every syllable, every letter, is just what it would be, had God spoken from heaven without any human intervention. Every scientific statement is infallibly accurate, all its history and narrations of every kind are without any inaccuracy. The words and phrases have a grammatical and philological accuracy, such as is possessed by no human composition."

Would not statements such as these, emanating from the pen of one entrusted with the religious training of youth, be sufficient to lead men astray from any belief except that founded upon *ex-parte* evidence such as this? It must be borne in mind, that the deductions we shall arrive at do not spring from premises of our own construction, but from statements laid down by the leaders of the religious faith of the people. With these that have been quoted before our eyes, would it be unreasonable or unfair to infer that the mass of mankind have no rational belief, that their religion is the fruit of unenlightened credulity, and, that with all the abhorrence mani-

festated by them towards the principles of the Roman Catholic faith and their oft-repeated boast of spiritual freedom, the common Papist and the common Protestant meet here on equal terms? Proof may be demanded in support of this assertion, and that proof can easily be obtained. The Papist builds his faith on the supposed infallibility of his church. He reads in his catechism, and is told by his priest that the church cannot err in what she teaches, and that she is composed only of those who believe as the Pope of Rome and those who hold communion with him do. He dares not doubt this, for in his table of sins, which he is compelled to confess, he is informed that it is a grievous crime to doubt in matters of faith. Reason is now dethroned; authority usurps its place, and implicit and unbounded faith in everything taught to him is the necessary consequence. On the other hand, the Protestant rests his faith on the Scriptures, which he is informed is the infallible word of God, on which he is to found all his "hopes for eternity," and from which he will receive "all his nearest and dearest consolations." This belief is taught to him before he has read it, or even can read it; and when he does sit down to its perusal, it is with the prepossession in his mind that he really is reading the infallible word of God. His belief, then, is as implicit, and founded on as little reason, as that of the Papist. We may, therefore, lay it down as an axiom, that the majority of men's motives of credibility are not rational, but the positive assertions of an assumed and by them undisputed authority, which they have either never discussed, or else durst not question.

(To be continued.)

THE PRIESTHOOD—WHERE IS IT, OR WHO HAS IT?

BY ELDER WILLIAM W. RYER.

(Concluded from page 3.)

Of those Protestant sects besides the Church of England, but very little is necessary to be said concerning their

claims to a Priesthood; for, what has been said of the Church of England may be applied to them. There is a

sect styling themselves "Apostolic Catholic Church," (commonly known as Irvingites) who claim to be Apostolical, saying that the Church of Christ has existed since the days of the Apostles, and that their mission is to reunite the scattered members of the one body of Christ. But to say that the Church of Christ has existed on the earth since the days of the Apostles, is absurd in the extreme, for, in this view of the matter, it must have been perpetuated through the Church of Rome, and, consequently, the Irvingites must base their claims to a Priesthood on the succession of Rome; and if, as I have sought to prove, the Church of Rome has not had a Priesthood, then this argument must fall to the ground in regard to the Irvingites, for they can claim none on those grounds. Again, if they do not claim it by a prescriptive right, but say that it has been restored to them, I must say that the proof thereof is wanting, for Mr. Edward Irving (the founder of the sect) did not claim that he was called of God unto this honor, which would have been necessary to make his calling or claims to a Priesthood legal in the eyes of God. Mr. Irving, and others of his sect, were ordained to offices such as Apostles, Evangelists, &c., but we are not informed from whence those individuals who ordained them received the authority to perform this act, as I have not found that they claimed to have received the ordination of an angel from heaven; and if not from heaven, it must have been from earth, therefore it must have been wholly the work of men, and, consequently, it cannot be said that its officers were sent of God.

I now come to the reasonableness of the claims of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to a Priesthood. If, as I have sought to prove, the Church of Rome has been for many centuries unacknowledged by God, and also its Protestant daughter, the Church of England; then, if there is a legal Priesthood upon the earth, it must be with the Latter-day Saints. And they do not claim it by any prescriptive right, as coming through the muddy and filthy channel of Rome's Apostolical succession, but by an im-

mediate restoration of it from heaven by the power of God. It was conferred on Joseph Smith by the very same persons who held it when the Savior was on the earth, thus again opening up the communication between heaven and earth after many long centuries of darkness and error. This is also in accordance with the text,—“No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.” If Joseph Smith had claimed to have received the Priesthood on the same grounds that the Church of England or the Irvingites do, then, according to the text, he would of a surety have been an impostor; but, his Priesthood came from a purer and holier source, even from the hands of the omnipotent and eternal God. Many in the world, I know, would say that this claim to a Priesthood is not reasonable, because, as they say, God does not speak any more to the children of men; still, he did speak unto them in ages past, calling them by his power to do certain works, and gave them a Priesthood in order that their acts might be acknowledged by him and binding in heaven. The Christian world does not see anything in this which is unreasonable; and if such a thing was not unreasonable in the days of Moses or Jesus, why is it unreasonable now? If, as the Christian world believe, God is unchangeable—the same yesterday, to-day and forever—how is it then unreasonable for him in this our day to call and ordain a man or men to do a work the same as he has done in ages past? I know it is hard for men to conceive that the religion of their fathers is wrong, and that the priest who christened them is devoid of the Priesthood of God; yet, notwithstanding this, it may be so. No doubt the Jews thought it hard in the days of the Apostles, to be told that the religion they had been taught to believe to be true, was inefficacious to save them, on account of their having transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the Everlasting Covenant, the same as present Christendom has done, till their religion had become scarcely a shadow of the one delivered to them by their great lawgiver Moses. Had the Jews

not wandered so far from the paths of their fathers, they would have known their Redeemer when he came to them, for the Scriptures testified plainly of him; and had the Christian world not wandered so far from the paths of the Savior and his Apostles, they would have known that the Priesthood which God conferred on Joseph Smith is genuine, for the doctrines which were revealed by God through him, testify of the genuineness of his calling by their strict accordance and compatibility with the Holy Scriptures. There are also other proofs that the Priesthood possessed by the Latter-day Saints is acknowledged of God; *par exemple*—the fruits of it. The Savior said, "by their fruits ye shall know them."

The Priesthood of God possessed by the Latter-day Saints dares to say unto all men, that inasmuch as they will repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins, they shall receive the Holy Ghost, the same as it was given in the days of the Apostles; and that this blessing does follow is testified to by the thousands who have yielded obedience to this call.

Now, if those administering these ordinances and making these promises did not possess the true Priesthood, would God verify the promise by conferring his Holy Spirit? Verily, no! And then all men would know that it (the Priesthood) was spurious, and that those men pretending to possess it were impostors.

This is a test which durst not be applied to any other church in Christendom, with any hope of having them endure it; for, if it were applied, the result would be like testing brass with *aqua fortis*, hoping to find it pure

gold. It is the consciousness of possessing this Priesthood which enables the Elders of Israel to boldly testify that the mission of Joseph Smith was divine, in spite of the sneers and frowns of a cold and unbelieving world; and though they may be ignorant as regards the musty theology or scholasticism of the age, yet they can feel, by the Spirit of God burning in their bosoms, that they have a right to speak with authority, and not as do the priests and scribes. Yes, the Priesthood is restored, and with it the Gospel of Jesus. It is now shedding its effulgent rays over all those who have yielded an obedience to its mandates—which are, faith, repentance, baptism, and the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit. It is by thus doing the will of the Father, which enables the Latter-day Saint, whether he has heard and received the Gospel in Britain, America, Scandinavia, Switzerland, India, Australia, or on the Isles of the Pacific Sea, to testify in all soberness that the doctrine is of God, and that the Priesthood, by the administration of which he has received the blessings of the Spirit of God, is from God. It is the power and authority of this Priesthood which enables the servants of God to gather out people of multifarious nations, tongues, nationalities, traditions, prejudices and religions, and have them leave the homes and sepulchres of their ancestors, and wend their way across the wide waters and broad prairies of Western America, to the land of Utah, there to be combined in one body of religion, sentiment, hope and faith, in unity, peace and friendship.

UTAH—WHAT THEY SAY OF HER IN THE EAST.

(From the Deseret News.)

Utah, its inhabitants and institutions, in the absence of more exciting subjects, continue to furnish matter for some of our eastern exchanges to dilate upon. We have no objections to our people and institutions being made the subjects of remarks, oral or

written; what we do object to is the unjust and false accusations made against them, the imputations recklessly thrown out, and the flimsy sophistry which runs through the so-called arguments used in opposition to them.

Polygamy continues to be spoken of as a "twin relic of barbarism" with slavery; and the Republican party are called upon to wipe it out, "peaceably if possible, forcibly if necessary,"—we quote from a New York paper. To call polygamy a "twin relic of barbarism" is an erroneous assumption. Every argument based upon such an assumption must be wrong and inconclusive, for the premises are false. Its only connection with "barbarism" is its antiquity. As well might monogamy be termed a "twin relic" on the same grounds; and as well might the decalogue be swept away in theory, as it too often is in practice, as another "relic of barbarism" that lay in the shades of antiquity. We protest against the term; it is incorrect, false and abusive; and the arguments based upon it are only calculated to influence unthinking minds. Polygamy is also spoken of as being "in plain opposition to divine and human law." What divine law is it in opposition to, or what human law, based upon that which the modern jurisprudence of Christendom claims as the basis of all its legal enactments, the ancient revelations of God to His children?

No statute can justly legalize a crime; nor can any law make that a crime which the Almighty has stamped with His approval and sustained as a virtue. Polygamy, however much abused it might be by unbridled passion, the degradation of ignorance, or the unrestrained acts of savage life, traces its origin directly to the Creator of man; and the greatest and most venerated names of antiquity,—names before which Christendom bends with mysterious awe, real or assumed, as the favored of God and the great benefactors of man, including the Savior of the world himself, were either actual polygamists in person, or of direct polygamic lineage. They gave a civilization to the world which has lived through thousands of years, and which the brightest minds of this and preceding generations own themselves humble copyists of,—and they practised or sustained polygamy, openly, honorably, legally, under the direct sanction of Heaven, and often by its immediate command. These are biblical truths, beyond successful contradiction.

We notice, among other things, that false accusations which we have before disproved, are repeated. Why is this so? Why is the same language used, when we have published the facts, *officially obtained*, which prove the statements made to be false. In ordinary life, when a man utters an untruth, the charitable supposition may be entertained, if he bears a respectable character, that he has been misinformed; but if it be repeated, after the truth has been made plain to him, he is, or should be, frowned from decent society as a moral plague-spot to be avoided. Are editors and newspaper writers in their public capacity to be exempt from the amenities of private citizenship, and do or say, unquestioned, that which would otherwise drive them from respectable society? Utah is again charged with not having paid any internal revenue tax; and further, that the government agents are not able to collect it, "nor in any way make them (the 'Mormons') comply with the special laws that have been necessitated by the rebellion." That statement is simply and unqualifiedly a falsehood, without even the shadow of a foundation. The writer of it has either wilfully and grossly lied, or is ignorantly and negligently culpable, in not possessing himself of the requisite information; for our article containing the refutation of the same statement before made, was mailed to the office of the paper that again contains it. The internal revenue, and every other tax imposed by government on Utah, have been and are cheerfully paid throughout the territory. This we state on the strongest assurances of its correctness by "the government agents" here, and from personal observation.

Are they bitterly prejudiced priests, anxious to have the "Mormons" exterminated, shoddy-contractors looking for another fat thing or two of Uncle Sam through a military crusade against us, or aspiring officers desirous of gaining laurels among the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, who are at the bottom of these newspaper attacks? The editors who permit their columns to be so abused, whether for favor or compensation, can best answer the question.

EXTRACTS FROM STEPHENS' AND CATHERWOOD'S TRAVELS
IN CENTRAL AMERICA.*(Continued from page 8.)*

Mr. Catherwood went to the ruins to continue his drawings, and I to the village, taking Augustin with me to fire the Balize guns, and buy up eatables for a little more than they were worth. My first visit was to Don Jose Maria. After clearing up our character, I broached the subject of a purchase of the ruins; told him that, on account of my public business, I could not remain as long as I desired, but wished to return with spades, pickaxes, ladders, crowbars, and men, build a hut to live in, and make a thorough exploration; that I could not incur the expense at the risk of being refused permission to do so; and, in short, in plain English, asked him, "What will you take for the ruins?" I think he was not more surprised than if I had asked to buy his poor old wife, our rheumatic patient, to practise medicine upon. He seemed to doubt which of us was out of his senses. The property was so utterly worthless, that my wanting to buy it seemed very suspicious. On examining the paper, I found that he did not own the fee, but held under a lease from Don Bernardo de Aguila, of which three years were unexpired. The tract consisted of about six thousand acres, for which he paid sixteen pounds a-year; he was at a loss what to do, but told me that he would reflect upon it, consult his wife, and give me an answer at the hut the next day. I then visited the alcalde, but he was too tipsy to be susceptible of any impression; prescribed for several patients; and instead of going to Don Gregorio's, sent him a polite request by Don Jose Maria to mind his own business, and let us alone; returned, and passed the rest of the day among the ruins. It rained during the night, but again cleared off in the morning, and we were on the ground early. My business was to go around with workmen to clear away trees and bushes, dig and excavate, and prepare monuments for Mr. Catherwood to copy.

While so engaged, I was called off by a visit from Don Jose Maria, who was still undecided what to do; and not wishing to appear too anxious, told him to take more time, and come again the next morning.

The next morning he came, and his condition was truly pitiable. He was anxious to convert unproductive property into money, but afraid, and said that I was a stranger, and it might bring him into difficulty with the government. I again went in proof of character, and engaged to save him harmless with the government, or release him. Don Miguel read my letters of recommendation, and re-read the letter of General Cascara. He was convinced, but these papers did not give him a right to sell me his land; the shade of suspicion still lingered: for a finale, I opened my trunk, and put on a diplomatic coat, with a profusion of large eagle buttons. I had on a Panama hat, soaked with rain and spotted with mud, a check shirt, white pantaloons, yellow up to the knees with mud, and was about as outre as the negro king who received a company of British officers on the coast of Africa in a cocked hat and military coat, without any inexpressibles; but Don Jose Maria could not withstand the buttons on my coat; the cloth was the finest he had ever seen; and Don Miguel, and his wife, and Bartolo realized fully that they had in their hut an illustrious incognito. The only question was, who should find paper on which to draw the contract. I did not stand upon trifles, and gave Don Miguel some paper, who took our mutual instructions, and appointed the next day for the execution of the deed.

The reader is, perhaps, curious to know how old cities sell in Central America. Like other articles of trade, they are regulated by the quantity in market, and the demand; but, not being staple articles, like cotton and

indigo, they were held at fancy prices, and at that time were dull of sale. I was to pay fifty dollars for Copan. There was never any difficulty about price. I offered that sum, for which Don Jose Maria thought me only a fool; if I had offered more, he would probably have considered me something worse.

We had regular communications with the hacienda by means of Francisco, who brought thence every morning a large guacal of milk, carrying it a distance of three miles, and fording the river twice. The ladies of the hacienda had sent us word that they intended paying us a visit, and this morning Don Gregorio's wife appeared, leading a procession of all the women of the house, servants and children, with two of her sons. We received them among the ruins, seated them as well as we could, and, as the first act of civility, gave them cigars all round. It can hardly be believed, but not one of them, not even Don Gregorio's sons, had ever seen the "idols" before, and now they were much more curious to see Mr. C.'s drawings. In fact, I believe it was the fame of those drawings that procured us the honor of their visit. In his heart, Mr. C. was not much happier to see them than the old Don was to see us, as his work was stopped, and every day was precious. As I considered myself in a manner the proprietor of the city, I was bound to do the honors; and, having cleared paths, led them around, showing off all the lions as the cicerone does in the Vatican or the Pitti Palace; but I could not keep them away, and, to the distress of Mr. C., brought them all back upon him.

Obliged to give up work, we invited them down to the hut to see our accommodations. Some of them were our patients, and reminded us that we had not sent the medicines we promised. The fact is, we avoided giving medicines when we could, among other reasons, from an apprehension that if any one happened to die on our hands we should be held responsible; but our reputation was established; honors were buckled on our backs, and we were obliged to wear them. These ladies, in spite of Don Gregorio's crustiness, had always treated us kindly, and we would fain have shown

our sense of it in some other mode than by giving them physic; but, to gratify them in their own way, we distributed among them powders and pills, with written directions for use; and when they went away, escorted them some distance, and had the satisfaction of hearing that they avenged us on Don Gregorio by praises of our gallantry and attentions.

That night there was no rain, and the next day, as the ground was somewhat dry, we commenced a regular survey of the ruins. It was my first essay in engineering. Our surveying apparatus was not very extensive. We had a good surveying compass, and the rest consisted of a reel of tape which Mr. C. had used in a survey of the ruins of Thebes and Jerusalem. My part of the business was very scientific. I had to direct the Indians in cutting straight lines through the woods, make Bruno and Francisco stick their hats on poles to mark the stations, and measure up to them. The second day we were thoroughly in the spirit of it.

That day Don Jose Maria refused to execute the contract. Don Gregorio was the cause. He had ceased to interfere with us, but at the idea of our actually taking root in the neighborhood, he could not contain himself, and persuaded Don Jose Maria that he would get into difficulty by having anything to do with us; he even told him that General Cascara's passport was worthless, and that General Cascara himself had gone over to Morazan. He carried his point for the moment, but in the end we beat him; and a fortnight afterwards Mr. Catherwood paid the purchase money and completed the contract.

After three days of very hard but very interesting labor, we finished the survey, the particulars of which I intend to inflict upon the reader; but before doing so I will mention the little that was previously known of these ruins.

Huarros, the historian of Guatemala, says:—"Francisco de Fuentes, who wrote the Chronicles of the Kingdom of Guatemala, assures us that in his time, that is, in the year 1700, the great circus of Copan still remained entire. This was a circular space surrounded by stone pyramids about six

yards high, and very well constructed. At the bases of these pyramids were figures, both male and female, of very excellent sculpture, which then retained the colors they had been painted with; and what was not less remarkable, the whole of them were habited in the *Castilian costume*. In the middle of this area, elevated above a flight of steps, was the place of sacrifice. The same author affirms that at a short distance from the circus there was a portal constructed of stone; on the columns of which were the figures of men, likewise represented in Spanish habits, with hose, and ruff around the neck, sword, cap, and short cloak. On entering the gateway there are two fine stone pyramids, moderately large and lofty, from which is suspended a hammock that contains two human figures, one

of each sex, clothed in the Indian style. Astonishment is forcibly excited on viewing this structure, because, large as it is, there is no appearance of the component parts being joined together; and though entirely of one stone, and of an enormous weight, it may be put in motion by the slightest impulse of the hand."

From this time, that is, from the year 1700, there is no account of these ruins until the visit of Colonel Galindo in 1836, before referred to, who examined them under a commission from the Central American government, and whose communications on the subject were published in the Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of Paris, and in the Literary Gazette of London.

(To be continued.)

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1866.

WHILE wishing the Saints a Happy New Year, it was our intention to have presented them with a few reports in relation to our present numbers in Europe, and also an approximation of the number of ships and Saints that have sailed from these shores since the Gospel was introduced by President Kimball and others in the year 1837, but we have not been able to accomplish this labor previous to the Birmingham Council. We trust, however, to publish these reports in the course of a few weeks.

The past year has been fraught with changes among the nations in political and religious matters, but no nation, people or tongue have experienced the progress which is so plainly visible in the midst of the Saints; and for this reason, that the latter people have acted with and by the authority of heaven, which no other people on the earth possess. Those who are faithful proclaim the Saints to have been steadily progressing in the things

of heaven, having no fears of President Johnson's policy of "overslaughing" the inhabitants of Utah with a more numerous Gentile population, but entering fearlessly on the new-born year, which is the thirty-sixth since the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth. Still, there are a few weak in the faith, who, despite the miracles which have already been wrought in Zion, think the kingdom in greater danger at present than at any previous period in its history, and tremble for the safety of the people in Zion, considering the great influx of Gentile immigrants into the Territory of Utah as indicative of the almost entire annihilation of the Latter-day Saint element. We have, however, never felt more assured of the triumph of the kingdom of God than at the present time, and we would say unto the Saints, Withdraw your eyes from those things which do not concern you, centering them upon the path which lies before you, and particularly upon those things that are likely to become a stumbling-block, if approached unawares. How many of the Saints have begun the new year resolving within their hearts they would live nearer to God than heretofore? How many of them are living in condemnation, being unable to approach their God with that degree of assurance which will call down blessings upon their heads? These questions we leave the Saints to answer, trusting that they will not attempt to deceive that Being who created the heavens and the earth, and all that are therein. The great weight upon our mind in relation to the emigration of the Saints, induces us to touch upon the principle of Gathering. It is by reiterating the commands of God in the ear of those to whom knowledge has been given, that we hope to succeed in awakening them to a proper sense of their duty. The commandment of the Almighty has already gone forth to the world unto all people to gather out to a place of safety; and if we acknowledge revelation to be essential to the salvation of man, we cannot ignore this principle revealed through that medium. "Who am I, that made man, saith the Lord, that will hold him guiltless who obeys not my commandments? Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and not fulfilled? I command and man obeys not, I revoke and they receive not the blessing; then they say in their hearts, this is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But, woe unto such, for their reward lurketh beneath, and not from above." Can we behold aught in this quotation which condemns us? We think there are many who are disobeying what they know to be the word of God. When we see those who closely scrutinize our principles, carefully peruse our works, and then reject the ordinance of baptism, &c., we wonder how they can have the hardihood to cast aside truths so plainly manifested. Still, their case cannot for one moment be compared to that of those who have received the principle of baptism and then reject the all-important principle of gathering. The Gospel will exalt or condemn us in the courts of heaven, and we cannot hope to cling to the world and still receive the blessings only attainable in Zion. That there are many in these lands who are able, and have been so for years, to emigrate we are well aware, and yet, they continue standing in the gap, entirely oblivious to the fact that they are retarding strangers from entering the fold of Christ. Our advice to such is to gather out while the way is yet open, lest haply it be closed and they die in these lands, not having received the blessings revealed for the faithful in the House of the Lord.

ABSTRACT OF CORRESPONDENCE.

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SOUTHAMPTON CONFERENCE.—Elder A. N. Hill writing from Southampton on the 21st of December, 1865, says :—"I arrived in Liverpool from Utah on the 11th of August last, in company with twelve others of the brethren, and was appointed to labor in the Birmingham District under the Presidency of Elder David P. Kimball. I enjoyed myself much in my travels with him and my visits to the Saints, amongst whom I found many warm-hearted, faithful people. I remained there until the Conference held in London, when I was appointed to preside over this Conference. I arrived here on the 6th of October last, and have endeavored since to the best of my ability, although in much weakness, to do all the good I could. I can truly say the Lord has been with me, and according to the sayings of the servants of the Lord, I have never wanted for friends. The Saints in this Conference are very much scattered. There are five Branches, but as they occupy a considerable extent of country, it takes a long time to visit them all. A great many of the Saints here are looking forward hopefully to their deliverance from these lands. I have striven to show the Saints the necessity of their saving all the means they possibly can for this purpose. The majority are, however, very poor, having but little employment in the winter season, and small wages in the summer, families of six and eight people having to live on as many shillings per week. Our meetings are generally well attended, and sometimes strangers visit us. We have baptized four people in Southampton Branch since my arrival, and have a prospect of still adding more to our numbers. There is a great amount of business done in this town; a great deal of wickedness is also prevalent both in high and low places. There are a great many evil influences to contend with here, that are calculated to lead away the unthinking and the unwary, requiring a great deal of wisdom and caution to be exercised by the servants of God. For my own part, I have never known a time when it was more necessary to live near the Lord and have his Spirit, than the present.

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NEWS FROM HOME.

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We have received files of the *Deseret News* and *Daily Telegraph* to the 30th of November last inclusive. From the *Deseret News* we extract the following with reference to the Colorado Navigation :—"The importance of the route to the Pacific coast by the Colorado river has been widely agitated here. Its practicability has had many believers, and its opening been desired by the people of this Territory. For this purpose the settlement of Caliville was formed, as a kind of half-way house between this city and San Francisco, and much interest has been manifested in the enterprise by our most influential citizens.

Undertakings of this kind are only prosecuted to a successful issue by persistent energy; and, indicative of that energy, we see that the matter is about

to be practically tested by the Pacific and Colorado Steamship Company, who advertize in the present number of the *News* the establishment of a regular despatch line of vessels from San Francisco to the mouth of the Colorado, there to connect with a couple of steamers, the "Esmeralda" and "Nina Tilden," which they purpose running from that point to Callville.

The Company, through their secretary, R. C. Eldredge, state that they have made the river navigable as far as Callville, and have prepared these steamers at a large outlay, and that they will guarantee to deliver freight at Callville with certainty and despatch. A sufficiently satisfactory guarantee, with the rate of freighting placed at a reasonably low figure, would unquestionably lead our business men to use the new route for bringing goods to this Territory, even with the strong inducements that are being held out from the east to continue and increase their trade from thence by the overland route across the Plains. The danger and uncertainty on the Plains, the difficulties that are continually arising through Indian disturbances, and the fact that teaming can be done from Callville part of the way north all through the winter, give the opening up of the Colorado an importance which under other circumstances it would not have. The growing trade with Utah is desired by influential merchants both east and west, and it is to our interest to avail ourselves of every facility that may be offered for supplying our demands in the cheapest and most expeditious way. We have heard it stated that some San Francisco merchants were about to forward goods for Utah by the Colorado, and send the invoices to this city, for sale on the arrival of the freight at Callville. This would restore the waning confidence of some here who were most sanguine concerning the opening of that river; and we have men of capital and enterprise, who are sufficiently anxious to bring the centre of Utah into more direct and speedy communication with the great marts of trade, to meet part way any effort that may be made to accomplish this object.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AMERICA.

Great Salt Lake City, }

Nov. 17, 1865. }

President Brigham Young, jun.

Dear Son,—Since writing to you I have received your favors of Sep. 19 and Oct. 2, and have been pleased to hear of your welfare and the prosperity of the Work under your care. It is grievous to hear of the misconduct and transgressions of Elders, and their deviations from the path of honor; but while men will give heed to the adversary, and not control their dispositions and appetites, such results will be witnessed. It is, nevertheless, strange that men who receive the Holy Priesthood, and are called to be teachers of

men, should act so utterly at variance with all their knowledge and professions, as your letter informs us has been the case.

We have been much exercised this Fall by the detention of the emigrating Saints on the road, and earnest and thorough exertions have been made to bring them in. We sent out mule and horse teams, many of which went as far down as Red Buttes—about 380 miles east—to meet the last company. No pains or expense have been spared to bring in the people before the snows and rigorous weather of the winter should come upon them. We have been relieved and gladdened by the arrival on Wednesday, the 15th inst.,

of the last of the women and children from the last (Capt. W. S. S. Willis') company; and should the weather keep favorable, the train itself, with which there is none but men now, will probably reach here in a few more days. We were threatened with an early commencement of the winter; but the storms passed off and we have had a most remarkable Fall; the weather has been magnificent, and the last company of teams, composed of mine, Joseph A.'s, and some few other brethren, which went out to meet the last company, went from here to the Rocky Ridge on the Sweet Water, in the charge of Capt. Orson Arnold, and returned without experiencing any but the most pleasant and delightful weather. The Lord has heard and answered the prayers of the Saints in behalf of the emigration, and has averted the storms that are usual in the mountains at this season.

You have doubtless seen, in the papers which are forwarded to you, a description of the three days' muster of the Militia of this county on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd instant. The men were favored with very fine weather while they were out, and the display was most excellent. There were many strangers present at the review, and the universal expression on all hands was that they had never seen a Militia muster in which the men marched and performed their evolutions so well, or appeared to so good an advantage. During the entire muster every one was cheerful, and not an angry word or unpleasant expression was heard from any quarter. How striking the contrast between a muster of Latter-day Saints in the capacity of a Militia in this Territory, with the musters usually held elsewhere! For a muster to be held without any person being intoxicated, or the name of the Lord being blasphemed, or without a fight, as our recent muster was, would be something unexampled and unheard of elsewhere. Considerable interest has been felt of late, both on the part of the officers and men, throughout the Territory in military matters, and a very commendable diligence has been shown in attending drill and in purchasing arms and uniforms. At the late muster Brother Robert T. Burton was elected Major-

General of this Division, in all the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Gen. D. Grant. Gen. D. H. Wells was on the ground every day, and was in command of the troops.

Quiet prevails in and around the City. The military have been making efforts to obtain suitable premises in which to quarter two companies of troops, but up to the present have not secured any.

A Hall has been built on the back part of S. J. Lees' lot, as a place of worship for the Chaplain of Camp and his fellow-worshippers. They call it "Independence Hall," and they think by such devices as these to overthrow the kingdom of God! They are a miserably low and contemptible crew who are associated together in this scheme. They are really beneath our notice; and with all their fretting and fuming, we have never deemed them worthy of any attention, but have permitted them to indulge in their bluster to their hearts' content, so long as they have confined themselves to talk. It is with us as it was with a man who had a dreadful termagant for a wife; she would become so violent at times that her abuse would attract the notice of their neighbours; and on one occasion, one of them expressed his wonder to the husband at his patient endurance of her conduct. He replied that, as it seemed to amuse her and it did not hurt him, he did not mind it, but he was willing she should enjoy herself.

The new Tabernacle is being pushed ahead as fast as practicable, and the main rafters are looming up and making a fine appearance. The present fine weather admits of work being done upon the building, and advantage is being taken of it to push it ahead.

You have every reason to be encouraged and to persevere in the discharge of the duties of your calling. Be not cast down by the wrong-doing of those who may be called your brethren or Saints; but strengthen yourself in the Lord your God, and He will bear you off triumphantly at all times and under all circumstances. Be faithful in discharging the duties of your calling, and keep your heart so clean and pure that the Lord can write His mind and will upon it, that you may never be in

ignorance or be destitute of His word to impart when needed.

We were much grieved to hear by telegraph that Elder George Sims, who was returning home from a mission to Great Britain, was drowned in the North Platte, at Red Buttes, on the — of October, while crossing the river on horseback after some cattle. His guileless simplicity and strict integrity had endeared him to all who knew him, and the regret at his untimely death was universal.

With love to yourself and wife, in which all join, and praying the Lord to give you every necessary qualification to enable you to magnify your calling, and to preserve you in health and purity to return home, I remain, your Father,

BRIGHAM YOUNG.

ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE.

Liverpool, December 30th, 1865.

President Brigham Young, jun.

Dear Brother,—Having just finished making up my accounts for the year 1865, I feel like penning you a few lines relative to the condition of the Work in this part. We have but ten Branches in the Conference at present, one entire Branch having been transferred to the Flintshire Conference since my last communication to you. The people, with but few exceptions, are feeling first rate and doing all in their power for the advancement of the truth upon the earth. We number in all 324. Doubtless these are the lowest figures used for many years past to represent the Liverpool Conference. Until quite recently, we have had upon our books between four and five hundred names, but there were nearly one hundred out of that number that even the Branch Presidents knew nothing about, and had no means of ascertaining their whereabouts or condition; not having seen them for years, and for this reason they have been omitted in our last report. We have baptized 39, emigrated 24, and cut off 10 during the year. In the summer months, outdoor preaching was attended to and many testimonies borne by the Elders; but it seems very difficult to awaken a feeling of interest with regard to our principles in the minds of the people;

but we know the result of our labors is with the Lord. During the latter part of the year we have held monthly Priesthood meetings in Liverpool, at which we selected brethren to go out to the surrounding Branches to preach on the Sabbath day; the effect has been very good. The brethren who have been chosen to fill appointments have felt blessed in going out, the Saints have derived benefit from their visits and teachings, and the Branches are in a healthy condition. The items of counsel and instruction given by yourself and the Elders at these meetings are appreciated, judging from the willingness manifested by the Priesthood to put them into practical operation. Several will emigrate from here in the spring; but there are some few who seem to think they can do better by staying in these Gentile lands a little longer. They have not yet seen quite enough of the corruption that exists in their midst. Still, I am happy to say these are but few, and the greater part of the people want to get away, where they can live under a purer influence.

Our condition, financially, has never been as satisfactory since my appointment to the Conference as at the present time. We can begin the new year free and untrammelled by debts. All the money received on Tithing, Book and Emigration accounts has been forwarded to the office, and everything properly balanced up. The principle of Tithing has been laid before the Saints in plainness; at the same time, it has been left entirely optional with all, whether they thought proper to avail themselves of complying with it and gaining the blessings or not. Some are proving the Lord in this, and can testify that he blesses them abundantly for their obedience. Every man who enjoys the Spirit of the Work desires to strengthen the hands of the Presidency both in these lands and in Zion.

There have for a long time past been little debts on the Branches for books, but through the co-operation of the several Agents and Presiding Elders we have been enabled to clear them off, and feel determined, by the help of the Almighty, that no debts shall accumulate to burden either the Branches or the Conference. The Branch Presidents are good men and strive to carry

out the counsel given them, and I have had much pleasure in laboring with them.

Elder Abram Hatch and myself visited the Saints on "Mona's Isle" in the beginning of December, and found them doing about as well as their circumstances would admit of. They labor under many disadvantages, not having a suitable meeting room, and not receiving very frequent visits from the Elders. We enjoyed our visit there, and trust it was beneficial to the people with whom we met.

With regard to myself, I feel just as well as ever I did in the Gospel, enjoying my labors in the ministry and desiring to carry out the counsel of the Lord's servants; being fully sensible that this is the only way to secure happiness for myself and be useful in His kingdom. Ever praying the Lord to bless you with every requisite blessing, and also all your associates in the ministry, I remain, your Brother in the Gospel,

SEPTIMUS W. SHARR.

SUMMARY OF NEWS.

ROME.—It is officially announced that nearly all the brigands in the Roman territory surrendered to the Papal authorities since the promulgation of the edict concerning brigandage. Various books of religion and philosophy have been placed in the index of condemned books. Amongst these are "Terre et Ciel," by Jean Reynaud, and an "History of the Schism between the Eastern and Western Churches," by Dr. Adolph Pichler, published in Germany.

ENGLAND.—The Fenian trials at Dublin were resumed on the 5th inst. The chiefs of the movement were all tried (excepting Stephens) at the last sitting of the special commission in the capital, so that only prisoners who are perhaps more to be pitied than blamed remain to be disposed of. The theory that the cattle plague is a form of smallpox has, we are informed, been accepted by several medical practitioners in Cheshire, who have successfully dealt with cases by treating them in accordance with this view. The catalogue of disasters caused by the series of storms which have swept across the North Atlantic during the last two or three weeks is daily growing longer. Vessels bound to America, which had fought their way half across the Atlantic, have been beaten back to British ports with loss of masts, sails, bulwarks, &c. Several emigrant ships have been unfortunate; and one of them, the Albion, bound to New York, has been lost off Orkney, eleven of the passengers and crew being drowned. The steamship California, which sailed for Jamaica with troops about a fortnight ago, has put back.

AMERICA.—The Government arrested Captain Semmes on the ground of having, during the fight with the Kearsage, raised a white flag and escaped under cover of cessation of hostilities. Captain Semmes claims that he was included in Sherman and Johnston's capitulation. The Chilean Minister at Washington has instructions to treat as pirates all persons aboard privateers not natives. The governor of South Carolina, on assuming office, telegraphed to President Johnson an assurance of his unalterable purpose to aid in upholding the Federal laws. The country population of portions of the States of Virginia and Mississippi are flocking to the large towns, fearing negro outbreaks. No negro riot is yet reported, except at Manchester, Virginia. A coloured man released two coloured prisoners from gaol at Alexandria, Virginia. A fight occurred between the blacks and the whites. Six negroes and four whites reported killed. Mr. Seward, in reply to a request of the New York merchants for friendly intervention of the United States in the Spanish-Chilian dispute, replied that the friendly offers of the United States had already been made and were still offered. It was reported that good would result therefrom.